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of the negro's presence. His statements are generally accurate, though lack of personal observation leads him into some errors of judgment.

CARL KELSEY.

University of Pennsylvania.

Van Rensselaer, Mrs. S. *History of the City of New York in the Seventeenth Century.* Two vols. Pp. xl, 1173. Price, \$5.00. New York: Macmillan Company, 1909.

Author, publishers and public have cause for felicitation on the completion of these handsome volumes giving us a satisfying history of the first century of the imperial city on Manhattan. The first volume deals with its career under the Dutch. With much but not excessive detail the causes and modes of the settlements are shown; the organization of the superior and local governments and the infinite complications and irritations arising between the home and colonial authorities are lucidly set forth; the clashes of local factions and the collisions with New England and New France are effectually exhibited; and the welter of futilities due to the "dull short-sightedness" of the paternal government under the divers governors is convincingly portrayed. In the second volume we are shown the causes and courses of the reorganization under the English, the autocratic and uneven rule of the royal governors, the predominance of European considerations, the growing popular discontent that culminated in Leisler's stormy career. The narrative closes with the latter's execution. While the author's major theme is the political history of the city, yet much attention is given to developments in industry and trade, to religious matters and to the social customs of the people. The persistence of sundry notable families and their continuous prominence in the life of the city and state and frequent references to present-day families give a personal touch to the narrative.

In passing judgment on the manner in which the author has accomplished her task one might easily fall into the pit of panegyric. Every page of the history demonstrates that her recital is the issue of extensive, minute and critical studies of documentary sources. She subjects tradition and the various contradictory claims of chroniclers to sharp scrutiny. She may entertain strong partisan views, but if so they are kept in check. Upon moot points there is a noteworthy fairness, fulness and frankness in the gathering, sifting and presentation of evidence and judicial caution in expressing conclusions that secure confidence in the efficiency of her investigations and the correctness of her findings. The style is engaging—calm, direct, lucid, forceful, solid, with no fine writing at all. With such masses of data assembled, the crispness and compactness of the exposition, the skilful weaving of numerous bits of extracts into a vigorous, easy-flowing narrative, implies masterful compression in composition. If the volumes to follow fulfil expectations thus created we shall have indeed a *magnum opus*.

F. I. HERRIOTT.

Drake University, Des Moines.